



Hittite *a-aš-zi* (3rd sg. pres. act.) ‘to remain, to stay, to be left’

Allan R. Bomhard
Florence, SC USA

This is the third paper in a row in which I am proposing a new Hittite etymology. As in the previous papers, here, I will be using the glottalic model of Proto-Indo-European consonantism (more accurately, Proto-Indo-Anatolian consonantism — for details, cf. Bomhard 2024) followed, in parentheses, by the traditional reconstruction (on which, cf. Byrd 2018).

In Sanskrit, there exists the term *ástam* ‘home, abode, setting’ — also the derivatives *astakam* ‘home’, *astyam* ‘house’. It is found in Avestan *astəm* ‘home’ as well. These forms are usually derived from **ḡs-to-* and have sometimes been compared with Greek νόστος ‘return, homecoming’, νέομαι ‘to come or go; to go away or back, to return’, νοστέω ‘to return, come, or go back; to return safe from danger’, νόστος ‘return, homecoming’, etc. and, within Sanskrit itself, *násate* ‘to approach, to go towards, to join’ (so, for example, Mayrhofer 1956—1980.I:66 and Uhlenbeck 1898—1899.I:18). Further afield, several forms from Germanic are also typically compared, such as Gothic *ga-nisan* ‘to be saved, rescued; to be healed’, etc. However, this etymology seems a bit contrived, and, to their credit, Beekes (2010.II:1008), Chantraine (1968—1980.II:745), Boisacq (1950:663—664), and Frisk (1970—1973.II:304—306) do not include Sanskrit *ástam* in any of the proposed cognates of Greek νέομαι ‘to come or go; to go away or back, to return’ and its derivatives. It is, however, included by Hofmann (1966:215), who derives Sanskrit *ástam* from **ḡstom*.

Now, note that Sanskrit *ástam* has the accent on the initial syllable. This is not what one would expect were this derived from **ḡs-*, with a syllabic nasal in the first syllable, as proposed by Mayrhofer and Uhlenbeck, for example. Consequently, a better derivation might be from **Aés-to-*, with initial *a*-coloring laryngeal, and, heretofore, no known non-Indo-Iranian cognates.

Enter Hittite *a-aš-zi* ‘to remain, to stay, to be left’. The following forms are attested: (3rd sg. pres. act.) *a-aš-zi*, (3rd pl. pres. act.) *a-aš-ša-an-zi*, (3rd sg. pret. act.) *a-aš-ta*, (3rd pl. pret. act.) *a-aš-še-er*, *a-aš-šer*, (3rd sg. impv. act.) *a-aš-du*, (3rd sg. pres. mid.) *a-aš-ta-at*; (participle) *a-aš-ša-an-t-*, *aš-ša-an-t-*; (inf. I) *a-aš-šu-wa-an-zi*; (impf.) *a-aš-ke/a-* (cf. Kloekhorst 2008:214—215; Puhvel 1984—1987:187—189). Neither Puhvel nor Kloekhorst suggest an etymology. Though Kloekhorst toys with the idea of derivation from **h₁eNs-*, this can hardly be considered as a serious proposal.

Two unusual things stand out concerning the Hittite forms: (1) lack of Ablaut in this stem and (2) internal geminate *-šš-*, when permitted by the cuneiform writing, both of which can be accounted for by reconstructing an initial *a*-coloring laryngeal. The fact that

the laryngeal was not preserved in Hittite points to **H₄-* and allows us to reconstruct Proto-Indo-Anatolian **H₄ós-* (**H₄és-*) ‘to remain, to stay’.

As noted by Buck (1949:§7,12 HOUSE), some words for ‘house, home’ come from ‘to remain, to rest, to stand, to dwell’, while others, such as Latin *mansiō* (> French *maison* ‘house’), come from ‘staying’, later ‘stopping place, station, lodging’ from the verb *maneō*, *-ēre* ‘to stay, to remain’ (cf. Buck 1949:§12.16 REMAIN, STAY, WAIT).

Combining the evidence of Hittite and Sanskrit lets us reconstruct a Proto-Indo-Anatolian verb **H₄ós-* (**H₄és-*) ‘to remain, to stay’. Sanskrit *ástam* ‘home, abode, setting’ and Avestan *astəm* ‘home’ can then easily be seen as nominal derivatives of this stem: **H₄ós-t^ha-* (**H₄és-to-*) ‘home, abode’. ■

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Allan R. Bomhard
 bomhard@aol.com